



PRESS RELEASE

Latino Immigrant Workers Demand Justice

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Boston, MA- Latino immigrant workers demand justice after experiencing labor exploitation. More than 30 Latino immigrant workers, who were employed by local cleaning company franchises, contracted to clean and maintain several Legal Seafood and The Cheesecake Factory restaurants in the Greater Boston area did not receive payment for regular and overtime hours. Their cases are pending with the Massachusetts Attorney General's office.

"The workers are demanding their legitimate rights as workers. Wage and hour laws apply to all workers, including immigrants. The workers are using their fundamental right to organize and are demanding the payment of their salaries, but more than that they are demanding the respect of their dignity as workers. The mission of Centro Presente's Worker Center is to educate, organize, empower and mobilize Latino immigrant workers experiencing injustice in the workplace in order to achieve positive and collective action for systemic change. We are helping these workers to raise their voices and demand justice," said Patricia Montes, Executive Director of Centro Presente.

"You deserve to be paid fairly for your work, including overtime hours. The federal Fair Labor Standards Act requires that employees must be paid overtime if they work more than 40 hours in a week. The workers are organizing many activities to achieve their goals. We are hoping to receive the support of our allies. As part of a workers' rights campaign, we are sending letters to the local cleaning franchises and the restaurants. Support justice for immigrant workers now," emphasized Yessenia Alfaro, Director of Organizing of the Chelsea Latino Immigrant Committee of the Chelsea Collaborative.

"I was employed by Coverall Cleaning Concepts to clean at Legal Sea Foods and The Cheesecake Factory restaurants in Boston, Chestnut Hill, and Natick," said Gloria Rodriguez, a worker member of Centro Presente **"We're asking for our salary. We're not asking for a loan or for anything to be given to us. We're just asking to be paid for the hours that we worked. We know there are many more people who have not joined this struggle yet, who have not broken their silence. United we know our force is even stronger as we go forward with this campaign,"**

"I came to this country with the hope that workers' rights would be respected here. However I found another reality when I started working with Coverall and the Xcel company," say Fernando Cervantes, a worker member of Chelsea Collaborative. **"Many times when I would go to cash the paycheck that I was receiving, it would be without funds in the account. We are going to continue fighting for our rights, we hope to receive our salaries and the recognition of our dignity as workers."**

Centro Presente and the Chelsea Collaborative are active members of the Immigrant Workers Center Collaborative (IWCC).

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